

**A HERO, BREAD  
UPON THE WATERS,  
ALICE LEARMONT**

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A hero, Bread upon the waters, Alice Learmont by Dinah Maria Mulock Craik

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**DINAH MARIA MULOCK CRAIK**

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A HERO,  
BREAD UPON THE WATERS.  
ALICE LEARMONT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN," "A NOBLE LIFE,"  
"CHRISTIAN'S MISTAKE," "TWO MARRIAGES,"  
"A LIFE FOR A LIFE," "OLIVE,"  
"FAIRY BOOK," &c., &c.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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“A HERO, my nephews?” echoed Uncle Philip, stealing in upon a conclave that was being held to decide the merits of a “fellow,” who was universally considered the head of the school—in fighting at least. “Pray, my good lads, what do you mean by ‘a Hero?’”

His nephews were silent. Probably they thought Captain Philip Carew was the person best fitted to answer his own question. For though not yet forty years of age, he had been bronzed in the Tropics, frozen in the Arctic Seas, had led forlorn-hopes in China, and commanded Pacific expeditions to the South Seas, and finally had returned, invalided by a shot on the field of Moultan in India. He had gone through many tribulations of divers kinds, yet he was still a handsome-looking fellow, with more brains and more heart than nine-tenths of mankind, even though he was a soldier.

He repeated his question, “Pray, what is a Hero?”

Still no answer.



"Get the dictionary!" said Uncle Philip. He looked out the word. "*Hero, a great man!* Short and terse, truly. Now boys, define that: 'A Hero, viz., A Great Man.'"

A few tried to do it; but nobody gave a clear reply.

"You are all puzzled? No wonder. That same definition has puzzled the world ever since it was a world. I myself racked my poor brains on the subject for three whole months. But I think I solved the question at last."

"How, uncle?" some one ventured to ask.

"Oh, it would be a long story. It happened many years ago, when I was a boy."

It was a magic beginning, "When I was a boy." Young people do so delight in a bit of autobiography. There was a general entreaty for that portion of Uncle Philip's history which taught him the true definition of a Hero.

He hesitated a little, for many reasons; but then he was such an unselfish kind-hearted soul, the very perfection of a bachelor uncle.

Soon, he hit upon a plan.

"Boys, there are twelve days between now and the New Year; and every day we have an idle hour or two between the lights, or just before bed-time. Now, in that hour I'll tell you, if you like, my adventures in search of a Hero. If by New Year's Eve, I have

not found him, nor you either, why—" here a sudden and rather mysterious smile danced in Uncle Philip's brown eyes—" we must look for him in some other way."

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The tale thus told, or rather the sketch of boyish life, too simple to be called a tale, has been preserved by the present Author.

She has done so, for the amusement of all boys, a race whom she heartily loves, from the petticoated urchin to the big hobbledchoy. But especially this book is written for another Philip—

PHILIP BURKE MARSTON,

now a little year-old child, but who, his god-mother hopes and prays, may one day mingle with the world of men, and there prove himself—in the noblest sense of the word—a Hero!

